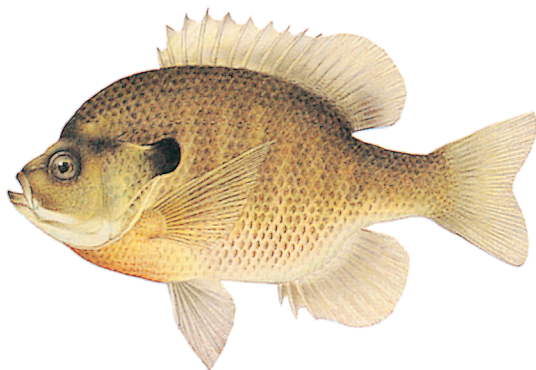


Bluegill

Lepomis macrochirus



Similar Species: Green sunfish, orangespotted sunfish, pumpkinseed

Identification: Gill cover lobe is entirely black, rear base of dorsal fin has a dark blotch, sometimes with dark vertical bars on sides.

The bluegill is found in every state in the continental U.S. In South Dakota, it has been stocked into lakes and impoundments statewide. Bluegills prefer slow-moving or standing water with aquatic vegetation or flooded timber. Bluegill diet consists mainly of larval and adult insects, plankton, snails, and algae. Spawning begins in the spring when water temperatures reach about 68 F and may continue into the summer. Individual fish may spawn more than once during the year. The male builds a nest on a sand or gravel bottom, often near other bluegill nests, and later guards the eggs and fry. Bluegill growth varies considerably in different bodies of water. This species often overpopulates when predator density is low.

